



Marketing agency maintains client relationships with cost-effective business payment solution

ContentLEAD experiences significant ROI from processing efficiency

Introduction

As a content marketing agency serving a wide variety of small- and medium-sized businesses, the ability to not only attract clients but foster long-standing, healthy relationships is key to success at ContentLEAD. Going hand-in-hand with this goal is the ability to intuitively process client payments and catalog payment data, all in an efficient and cost-effective manner – something made possible with Vantage’s business payment solutions.



Like many marketing agencies, ContentLEAD has a wide variety of clients to cater to, each with their own billing schedules and specific billing requirements.

Industry Challenges

ContentLEAD has a wide variety of clients to cater to, each with their own billing schedules and specific requirements for when and how much they can be charged at a designated time. Selecting and implementing the right payment technology is a significant hurdle to productively and effectively collect payments. For ContentLEAD, having a robust recurring billing solution that securely encrypts and tokenizes our client's cards on file in a remote data vault is critical.

Additionally, when client card payments are processed, incurring high card processing rates

eats into the company's bottom line. For marketing agencies that rely on card payments, knowing the difference between a commercial card and a consumer card is essential. Unfortunately, industry-wide misconceptions of the two continue to persist, sometimes making it seem as if commercial and consumer

cards are interchangeable. This couldn't be further from the truth. At quick glance, one card may look indistinguishable from another, but what many businesses don't realize is the vast differences in acceptance fees between the different types of card and charge products issued in the market. Interchange is the largest component of the costs business pay to turn a card payment into a cash deposit. Not recognizing and managing card Interchange expenses down to the transaction level can make payment collection for companies like ContentLEAD unnecessarily costly.

Commonly, agencies like ours are marketed to with "rate-as-low-as" card processing offers – offers that assume a card-present, consumer card is being presented for payment. However, eventually merchant statement billing reviews uncover "non-qualified" fees revealing the high cost of accepting commercial cards from business and corporate customers.

Complicating matters is that there are many flavors of commercial card products issued, from small business debit and credit to corporate and purchasing cards. Being able to manage these different card products and qualify them for the lowest available interchange rates requires a payment

processing platform uniquely designed to pass Level 3 line item invoice data and meet additional qualification requirements. Taking these steps will reduce the surcharge costs associated with these transactions — and is essential to thriving from, rather than drowning under, business card processing fees.



Selecting the Right Payment Partner

Vantage provides payments and services to merchants, businesses and developers. With commercial card use experiencing double-digit growth rates, ContentLEAD recognized it needed a partner with expertise in commercial card payment processing.

Vantage presented a unique combination of payment technology offers that could be configured to meet our current and future needs. ContentLEAD can now securely process one-time and repeat client billing using

Vantage's payment services hosted in a PCI DSS 3.0 compliant - Level 1 - data center. This lowers processing risk, reduces our PCI scope and ongoing validation requirements and was included as a standard feature at no extra cost.

Vantage was able to guide us in updating our payment acceptance policies and procedures as well, showing us the negative impacts of pre-authorizing cards for example while providing better alternatives.

ContentLEAD also chose Vantage for its ability to qualify card transactions at Level 3 and large ticket incentive Interchange rates. Their monthly PayView analytics and reporting dashboard helps us monitor our costs.

Additionally, Vantage provides ACH processing within the same solution, providing a single comprehensive tool for different payment processing needs. This is a significant streamlining advantage for companies that accept a mix of credit and debit cards and ACH payments – and it's nice to know it's available to us should the need arise.

Vantage presented a unique combination of payment technology offers that could be configured to meet ContentLEAD's current and future needs.

Vantage payment services also integrate seamlessly into accounting packages and with its payment API, along with responsive technical support, sample code and test accounts, we are confident we can expand our payment reach quickly as needed.

Providing a Significant Boon to ContentLEAD's Continued Growth

Vantage set itself apart from other payment processing services with their ability to manage Interchange qualifications and provide expertise on payment best practices. Having a partner that understands the nuances of the payments business is an invaluable ROI resource.

Since ContentLEAD is paid by clients almost exclusively through credit cards, our partnership with Vantage has provided a significant ROI from processing efficiency and data security to better Interchange qualifications, all of which has improved profit margins. This will become even more important as the company continues to expand, attracting more clients and with them more credit card payments.

"Vantage is both a better value than our previous credit card processor and provides superior quality in saving us on card processing fees," says Christine Rose, Chief Operations Officer of ContentLEAD. "We've since been able to allocate those savings toward other important business functions, savings we wouldn't have without using Vantage."

But more than just providing an intuitive, functional card payment processing solution,

Vantage is also committed to providing a thorough and helpful customer service experience for partners.

"Not only does Vantage provide us with the most competitive rates on the market, they're also quick to respond in the event an issue ever arises," adds ContentLEAD CEO Tom Agnew. "When we had to transfer over from our previous provider, Vantage walked us through every step, and made the whole process quick and easy."

Conclusion

Marketing agencies like ContentLEAD, and any organization that bills customers' electronically on a regular basis, stand to benefit significantly

from reevaluating their current business payment solutions.

Understanding the difference between commercial and consumer cards with awareness that traditional 'consumer oriented' payment gateways cannot meet the unique processing requirements of commercial card payments is the first step. Like any other business function, with proper data analytics, card processing can be managed to successfully reduce costs while keeping data security top of mind.

ContentLEAD is benefiting from its partnership with Vantage to help it navigate the complexities of business payments while still accommodating our clients' preferred payment methods.

About VantageB2B

VantageB2B provides a suite of payment solutions including B2B Level 3 purchasing card and GSA payment processing; API integrations to ecommerce and ERP platforms; and tokenization data security solutions. Trusted since 1996, Vantage provides payment services to clients in all 50 states. Vantage is home to world-class payment solutions and features the best package of price, terms, service, solutions and incentives available in the payments industry. Vantage supports B2B and B2G clients with guidance on payment acceptance policies, strategies and best practices to lower cost, increase productivity and enhance security.

**For more in Vantage, please visit www.vantageb2b.com
or email sales@vantageb2b.com.**

About ContentLEAD

ContentLEAD is a Boston-based content marketing agency that develops digital marketing strategies for both B2B and B2C small- and medium-sized businesses, tailored to driving traffic, leads and conversions. These marketing strategies include building new websites, maintaining blogs, developing videos and updating social media profiles geared toward SEO value.

**For more on ContentLEAD, please visit www.contentlead.com
or email info@contentlead.com.**